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DISTANCE EDUCATION IN REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE: A CASE STUDY OF UTTAR PRADESH

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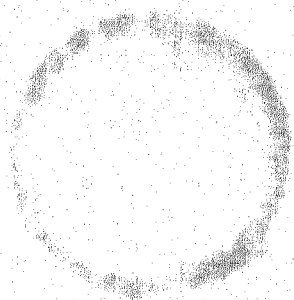


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EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Education refers to the learning process, i.e. the mental process of internalising an external event in order to understand and control it. It is a key element in the development and utilisation of human resources and also has a long term bearing on the trajectory of development. Education could also refer to the infrastructure which makes learning process possible. It has always been accorded an honoured place in Indian Society. The great leaders of the Indian freedom movement realised the fundamental role of education and stressed its unique significance for national development. Gandhiji formulated the scheme of Basic Education seeking to harmonise intellectual and manual work. This was a great step forward in making education directly relevant to the life of the people.

After independence, great stress had been given by the government to give increasing attention to education. To achieve this goal, certain changes were to be brought about in the overall system of education. Thus, several committees and commissions set up by the government from time to time came up with suggestions to tackle the problem of educational reconstruction. The need to link education with national development was emphasised and for this the educational system was to be properly organised both qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

DISTANCE EDUCATION IN INDIA

The educational system can be divided into formal and non-formal. The formal one is a conventional system of education i.e. face-to-face interaction while informal is incidental education through reading, attending lectures, participating in seminars, etc., which can either be distance or non-distance education. The teaching - learning process is a communication process thus the communication process should be improved in order to improve informal education. An open system of education cuts across all such forms of education and may be expressed in terms of formal, nonformal, informal and distance learning systems. Here, we are concerned with the concept of Distance Education. Conceptually, the learning process is the result of the interaction of the teacher and taught. In this sense, education is a one-to-one relationship. Considering the fast growth of population limitation of resources at individual and governmental level and the growing thirst for education, it is not feasible to provide required infrastructure for formal and conventional education. Therefore, the only remedy is Distance Education. It has been further observed that due to the hardships of life, students are not able to spare much time for formal education. Hence the importance of Distance Education is self-evident.

Distance Education is a wider system of education because it imparts education in a broader term of conventional

education. It is indirect education imparted for real life setting of an individual who is free to learn at his/her own pace. It is non-traditional type of education which makes use of all communication media including print. The main principles with which distance education operates are education for all and the word of mouth is not indispensable for academic communication.

The Distance Education may take various forms:

- (a) The first and the simplest is the correspondence education mainly for undergraduate students.
- (b) The second form of Distance Education is that which uses not only the postal method but also the electronic media. The television may also be considered as a supplement to the written lessons.
- (c) The third form of Distance Education is one which breaks away from the established syllabus and content of the schools and the universities and innovates with the new learning contents.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES IN UTTAR PRADESH

The open system of Education is a colossal task and at the same time is a welcome challenge. In our country efforts

were made in 1971 when Government of India appointed a committee under the chairmanship of the then Vice Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. It recommended an establishment of open university at national level but Andhra Pradesh took the lead in 1982. Although this was not the lone effort made. Uttar Pradesh, the largest state in the country, in terms of population took the initiative. Meerut University was the first one to establish an Institute of Correspondence Course and Continuing Education in 1972 followed by Allahabad. A National Open University has been set up in 1985 as a unifying component of a national educational system.

Uttar Pradesh is a land of geographical social, political and cultural diversities with a very poor literacy rate of 27.15%. Being a financially poor state, with high population pressure, per-capita allocation of resources for education is meagre.

Moreover, seats of learning are not well linked with rest of the parts. Hence, it is believed that through Distance Education, the state, may overcome the problem of achieving the educational targets.

The literacy rate in the state is 27.15% according to 1981 census of which 11.96% are educated upto primary and middle level and 4.64% upto Matriculation, Higher Secondary or equivalent levels. Literates without any educational level account for 7.20% and 1.36% are Graduates or of higher educational levels.

Since we are concerned here only with districts Allahabad and Meerut of Eastern and Western regions, the literacy recorded with primary and middle levels, there are 433400 and 396821 respectively. The literacy recorded with Matriculation, Higher Secondary or equivalent levels of education in the two districts is 222508 and 194715 respectively.

The total population of Uttar Pradesh in 1951 was 63.22 million which increased to 73.75 in 1961 resulting into 16.66% increase during this period. The increase of total population in the decades of 1961-71 was 19.77% as against 25.50 in 1971-1981. The growth rate of rural population has behaved more or less like the total population in general, in the 1961-71 and 1971-81 census. During 1961-71 growth rate of rural population was almost equal to growth rate of the total population, but during 1971-81 it has gone below the growth rate of the total population.

After having known the spread of education in India and then in Uttar Pradesh, on the basis of literacy rate, population, educational facilities, etc., Uttar Pradesh has taken two major steps in establishing Institute of Correspondence Education which are at Allahabad and Meerut Universities. Since distance education is not spread throughout the state, i.e., in all the five regions, we would concentrate only on the western concentrating on Meerut, the first centre of Correspondence Education. In this way, we would be in a comparable situation with that of Eastern.

GROWTH OF DISTANCE EDUCATION IN INDIA AT VARIOUS LEVELS

Distance Education has witnessed rapid growth at all levels in the recent past. There are now an increased number of universities which offer distance education courses to its students, from 4 in the 1960 to 37 in 1985. This is sure an improvement in the overall educational system of India. The total enrolment in higher education is 11% of total enrolment. Correspondence Education in India took the start two and a half decades ago at the University of Delhi and witnessed a successful mission. Seeing this, various other universities took the responsibility of starting correspondence education at various levels. The number increased to 37 in 1985 with the total enrolment of 4,00,000 students at various levels.

In its first stage when we realised the importance of distance education there were only four Institutes of Correspondence Education established namely, "School of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education" Delhi (1962), "Directorate of Correspondence Courses" Punjabi University, Patiala, "Institute of Correspondence and continuing Education", University of Meerut, Meerut (1968) and "Institute of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education", Mysore (1969). This growth continued in near future but with a slow pace. Many other such Institutes

and universities came into being all over the country within a decade, such as "School of Correspondence Courses, of Andhra University, Visakhapatnam (1972), "Institute of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education, University of Allahabad, Allahabad and "Department of Correspondence Courses, SNDT Women's University, Bombay (1978) "Directorate of Correspondence Courses and continuing education, Annamalai University, Annamalainagar (1979). There was more of trial and error measure in establishing such universities as an alternative mode of education. By now, the correspondence education got equal importance as that of conventional education. But, among these new institutions, Andhra Pradesh took the lead by establishing an Open University to promote Open University and Distance Educational systems. The idea behind establishing such an university was to impart education in all parts of the country through its well planned network.

The University Grants Commission adopted a liberal view in granting sanction to Distance Education Institutions. It was as far back as in 1970 that UGC initiated the programmes of Continuing Education. At present, over 90 universities and 2,000 colleges are involved in adult education, out of which 37 universities are offering continuing education programmes.

The University Grants Commission in its policy frame in 1978, accepted the concept of continuing education/extension as an equally important function of higher education. Guidelines

were evolved emphasising that there should be wider spread of knowledge and skills covering all sections of society especially to unprivileged ones. The unprivileged ones are not only those who can not afford university education, but also many more who could not continue their education for one or the other reasons. For example, some are forced to go for a job, some are dropped out due to family liabilities, illness, dislocation from their places, women who generally give up education after marriage etc. But in the true sense learning is a continuous process which does not end even after acquiring the highest degree. Therefore, in order to have a comprehensive and integrated approach, various facts of education such as continuing education, adult education, population education, science for the people, planning forums etc. were aggregated under one single umbrella of extension.

It is a positive sign that besides teaching and research the University Grants Commission has considered 'Extension' as the third function of the universities. It has been reviewed that there are positive gains in making the system flexible and open, change in attitude towards obligation to society through a two way process, programme expansion and emergence of Adult Education as a discipline.

The thrust areas under continuing education include:

- (i) development of vocational skills and professional competence among technical, managerial, industrial and office workers, entrepreneurs and unemployed youth;
- (ii) remedial or bridge courses;
- (iii) promotion of activities for self-employment and self reliance;
- (iv) need-based programmes for community development, and for particularly less privileged sections of society;
- (v) training and extension packages for functionaries of various social development.

The main target groups would be women, workers including slum dwellers and migrant workers, school dropouts and unemployed youth, professionals and para-professionals, business executives and the citizens as per needs.

The continuous education has wide coverage. The operational approach for continuing education suggests five types of extension education, namely:

- (a) Substitute Education (mainly refers to adult education programme, with a focus on universalisation of elementary education for those in the group of 6-14 years of age and programme of eradication of illiteracy for those in the age group of 15-35 years through a centre base approach);
- (b) Complementary Education (the problem of dropouts is second to that of illiteracy in its intensity. This leads to educational wastage, to avoid such wastage open university system is a remarkable step in this direction to reverse the dropouts to their original state, by way of complementary education);
- (c) Prolongation or Extended Education (this aspect is given a shape through evening classes, Adult Schools, Shramik Vidyapaths etc.). This strategy helps in widening horizons, advancing professional competence and training for new skills. Thus it provides supplementary education. This field has been successfully undertaken by the universities and colleges);
- (d) Further or Enrichment Education (this implies deepening of knowledge and furtherance of education through inservice training courses and updating of professional knowledge and skills. The need of such kind of education is increasingly felt by professional institutes);

- (e) Individual Development (without individual's development all the previous formal or non-formal educational offerings will spell a failure. This can only be achieved through strategies where a teacher possessing such supreme characteristics meet his students in workshops, in symposia, creating case histories and thus projecting components of a developed personality);

THE STATISTICAL ASPECT OF GROWTH

The distance education became more and more advanced at the college and university level. There were at least 40,753 students receiving education through distant mode of teaching in 1971-72. By 1975-76, total enrolment went up to 59,445 indicating a growth rate of 9.7% annum. The growth rate increased to 15.2% per annum and enrolment went up to 1,59,712 in 1982-83. The annual enrolment rate in correspondence education superceded the enrolment in conventional education in the recent past. The increasing importance and acceptance of distance education can be seen in the following table:

ENROLMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA: 1982-1983

Sl. No.	Institution/ modes	Under-graduate courses	Post-graduate courses (including Research)	Diploma/ Certificate	Total No. of students
1.	Regular University Department and Colleges	27,45,381 (96.2)	3,45,265 (87.1)	45,340 (93.8)	31,36,986 (95.1)
2.	Correspondence /Distance Education	1,05,628 (3.8)	51,017 (12.9)	3,067 (6.2)	1,59,712 (4.9)
	TOTAL	28,51,009 (100.0)	3,96,282 (100.0)	49,407 (100.0)	32,96,698 (100.0)

In the period 1975-76 to 1982-83, the annual rate of growth of enrolment was 15.2% in correspondence courses as against 3.7% in the formal university courses. The enrolment grew at the post-graduate level by 23.8% as against 5.5% in university departments and colleges. At the undergraduate level, the growth rate of enrolment in correspondence courses, though higher than in regular colleges and university, was much lower than the growth rate at the post-graduate level. In other words, greater expansion of distance education has taken place at the post-graduate level during 1975-76 to 1982-83 than at the under-graduate level. Some diploma/certificate courses have also been started recently. However, the growth rate of enrolment in these courses is not

very significant. By this, we can easily deduce that the growth of enrolment in the correspondence institutions has been more rapid to that of the conventional institutions.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES IN INDIAN UNIVERSITIES AT A GLANCE

Year	Under-graduates	Post-graduate (including Research)	Diploma/ Certificate	TOTAL
1971-72	30,169 (74.0)	6,172 (15.1)	4,412 (10.8)	40,753 (100.0)
1975-76	48,016 (80.7)	11,429 (19.3)	-	59,445 (100.0)
1982-83	1,05,628 (66.2)	51,017 (31.9)	3,067 (1.0)	1,59,712 (100.0)
Compound Annual Growth Rate of Enrolment 1971-72 to 1975-76	12.29	16.63	-	9.73

The above analysis throw a light on the fact that although over a period of time, there has been a fast expansion in the number of universities offering teaching through distance education/correspondence courses. But, except a few centres like Annamalai University, University of Madras, Madurai-Kamaraj

University, University of Mysore & Punjab University, rest of the universities have incorporated this new learning system for the names sake. The courses offered by them are restricted to a common package, the desired opportunities are not available to the learners. The case of Uttar Pradesh is much more depressing, population-wise it is the largest state of the Union and second in terms of area, has only two centres of distance education Meerut district, in the Western region and Allahabad in the Eastern region have only one centre each, while Central region comprising of the State's capital Lucknow, Bundelkhand and Hill regions are completely ignored on account of development of centres for distance learning. The courses offered by the existing two centres are restricted to a few traditional ones. However, opening of Regional Centre of Indira Gandhi National Open University and its branches at various places in the state has given an opportunity to the people of this state in general and particularly to the regions which were ignored in the past.

However, the growth of distance education at the higher secondary level has been almost negligible in comparison with undergraduate levels. There are various certificate/diploma courses run by different correspondence institutions in higher education. We can hope to have education imparted through distance in future, at the higher secondary level also, when we have a separate State Open University established in Uttar Pradesh.

Indira Gandhi National Open University and Its Success:

Along with the establishment of Andhra Pradesh Open University, the need was felt to start a National Open University. The Government of India appointed a Committee, with G. Parthasarathy as its Chairman, to look into its feasibility. The committee submitted its report in 1976 and recommended the starting of a National Open University. In a situation of this type, where the expansion of enrolments in higher education has to continue at a terrific pace and where available resources in terms of men and money are limited, the obvious solution, if proper standards are to be maintained and the demand for higher education from different sections of the people is to be met, is to adopt the university systems with its provision of higher education on part time basis. The group, therefore recommends that the Government of India should establish as early as possible a National Open University by an act of Parliament.

The Union Minister of Education and Social Welfare also stressed the need for the reappraisal of priorities for achieving the disclosed objectives of universalisation of education by 1990. The Minister suggested that the potentialities of mass-media for education should be explored.

The idea to implement the report of Parthasarathy Commission was delayed but was revived in 1984. In 1985, it was declared by the Prime Minister to establish a Indira Gandhi

National Open University as a part of the new educational policy. The jurisdiction of Indira Gandhi National Open University covered the entire country with a well planned network spread all over the country. The IGNOU offers short and long term courses, giving degree, diploma, certificate, graduate, post-graduate and research degrees. It has flexibility of courses and its completion. At present, the university has offered only two courses - Diploma in Distance Education and Diploma in Management Studies - with good enough number of students enrolled for them.

The National Policy of Education (1986) stresses the importance of non-formal system of education to provide extended educational facilities in the country. This will not only strengthen the distance education institutions but also improve the quality of education. Education could be provided to all. The Indira Gandhi National Open University holds the responsibility of promoting open university and distance education systems in the country for higher education. It is expected to be a space-setter for all distance teaching institutions in the country providing highest standards of education.

There have been proposals from various states to set up open universities. Rajasthan and Bihar have already implemented their plan. Uttar Pradesh seems to have postponed the decision to start open university. If such state universities are established there would be a lot common between them and the National Open University. Distance Education would be more encouraged and strengthened with such a kind of network all throughout the country.

The Indira Gandhi National Open University has taken major steps in recent times to alleviate some of the problems like non-accessibility of higher education to a large section of people, inability of students to become full time students to increase their qualifications/skills.

There has been a sizeable expansion of education in educational expenditure in India to improve quality of education in India but still India lags far behind most of the other countries. The IGNOU provides quality education to a large number of people. The methodology adopted is parallel to open university system, by removing constraints of time and space to a large extent. Various communication media like print, audio and video brings the education at the doorsteps of the learners. In future other wider media like T.V. and radio may also be adopted. The learners are free to choose any course, also on a few relaxations done by the University. The main centre provide themselves explanatory instructional materials along with supplementary studies. The study centres organises teaching programmes. The Regional Centres occasionally conducts contact programmes in which the learner meets their peer groups, teachers etc. The student is at any time free to avail the facilities provided at these centres. The touch can be maintained in postal way or phone also. There are assignments a learner has to complete from time to time, on the basis of which they are assessed and evaluated. The counselling is available on specified days and times. At present there are 13 regional centres and 133 study centres all over India. More

are likely to be added.

IGNOU in Uttar Pradesh : The regional centre for U.P. region was established in 1986. There are total 17 study centres and 1 is likely to be open in the area. The facilities provided to this centre are by the main centre. The growth of study centres in U.P. are mainly due to the demand for initiating more programmes, availability of infrastructure and counsellors. They can also be opened at places where facilities for higher education are limited. There are study centres in areas like Almora, Ballia, and Gorakhpur in U.P. A detailed and comparative table of various disciplines at different study centres of IGNOU is given below :

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INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY REGIONAL CENTRE, LUCKNOW

ADMISSIONS 1989-90

STUDY CODE	CENTRE NAME	BPP 88			PROGRAMMES										TOTAL
		BPP	BDP	BDP 89	BDP II	DIM	ADM	SDM	CFN	DDE	DCE	BLS			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
2701	Lucknow	89	95	98	71	276	63	22	112	43	25	120	1014		
2702	Agra	09	97	26	59	30	11	05	53	-	-	-	290		
2703	Allahabad	35	29	12	23	62	29	06	-	-	01	-	197		
2704	Bareilly	58	84	24	89	60	08	02	-	-	-	-	325		
2705	Dehradun	60	87	31	43	161	54	11	49	31	07	-	534		
2706	Kanpur	60	86	27	2	90	11	07	33	-	-	-	335		
2707	Modinagar	54	66	24	18	28	14	04	26	-	-	-	234		
2708	Varanasi	47	79	115	75	75	08	-	52	26	-	42	519		
2709	Gorakhpur	15	17	67	3	10	-	01	23	-	-	-	164		
2710	Sultanpur	27	14	08	04	01	-	-	-	-	-	-	54		
2711		40	46	26	14	-	-	-	34	-	-	-	160		
2712	Jhansi	80	71	09	07	20	03	-	-	-	-	-	190		
2713	Aligarh	106	84	11	07	08	03	-	20	-	-	-	239		
2714	Moradabad	51	24	15	02	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	92		
2715	Gopeshwar	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29		
2716	Ballia	13	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43		
2717	Almora	10	-	04	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14		

At present IGNOU is offering B.A./B.Com., Bachelor In Library Science and Information, Masters Degree In Management, Diploma In Distance Education, Creative Writing In English and certificate In Food and Nutrition, Programmes leading to Diploma and Bachelor Degree In Computer/Informatics would be launched shortly. All the study centres are active for B.A. and B.Com., but for other programmes only a few study centres provide facilities. There are other programmes like Diploma in Office Management and Bachelor in Computer for Teachers in the future policies of IGNOU. It has taken a step forward to Science and Technology and plans to offer programmes in Science and Technology and Health Sciences.

According to the information collected from the Director, Regional Centre, the trend in enrollment of students in various programmes has increased. It has been risen from 250 in 1987 to over 10000 in 1990 academic session which shows the remarkable progress of IGNOU in a short span of time. The first batch of students was admitted in 1987 for Diploma in Distance Education.

Thus, the University is fulfilling its goals to provide quality higher education to a large section of society, without the limitation of resources to some extent.

REGIONS : CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

CONCEPT OF A REGION - The concept of a region was introduced and elaborated by German, French and British Geographers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Regions were defined on the basis of their geographical, environmental and human activities. According to the Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, "a region is a homogeneous area whose physical and cultural characteristics are distinct from those of neighbouring areas." As part of a national domain, a region is sufficiently unified to have a consciousness of its customs and ideals and thus possesses a sense of identity distinct from rest of the country.

India being a federal state with lots of horizontal and vertical diversities on the one hand there is a state like Kerala with 100 percent literacy & Arunachal Pradesh with a literacy rate of only 20.79 percent. On the other side over all literacy rate in India is only 37 percent which is far below than any developed nation's literacy rate. A large set of the social, economic and political problems are caused on account of illiteracy and poor level of general education.

In India with high population pressure and scarce resources with alternative uses, expansion of education has been limited. The problems differ from state to state and region to region. In the present exercise we would analyse the problem of distance education in the regional perspective of Uttar Pradesh. Since distance education

is not evenly spread all over the state and predominates only Eastern and Western regions. These regions have one centre of "Distance Education", Meerut in Western region and Allahabad in Eastern region. Therefore, the study is confined to these two centres of distance education.

REGIONAL PROFILE OF UTTAR PRADESH :-

The regional profile of Uttar Pradesh would be examined with special reference to Eastern and Western regions. Geographically, the state of Uttar Pradesh consists of four natural parts: the Hill area in the North along the Himalayas; the sub-mountain track comprising Bhabar and Tarai, the Yamuna-Gangetic Plain with fertile alluvial soil; and the Hill Plateau region lying to the South of the Gangetic Plain.

The census classification of the regions of U.P. is done in a different manner. In 1951 census of U.P., the state has been divided into five natural divisions, based upon physical and economic factors. This classification was modified in 1961 census, though the criterion of natural division was unchanged.

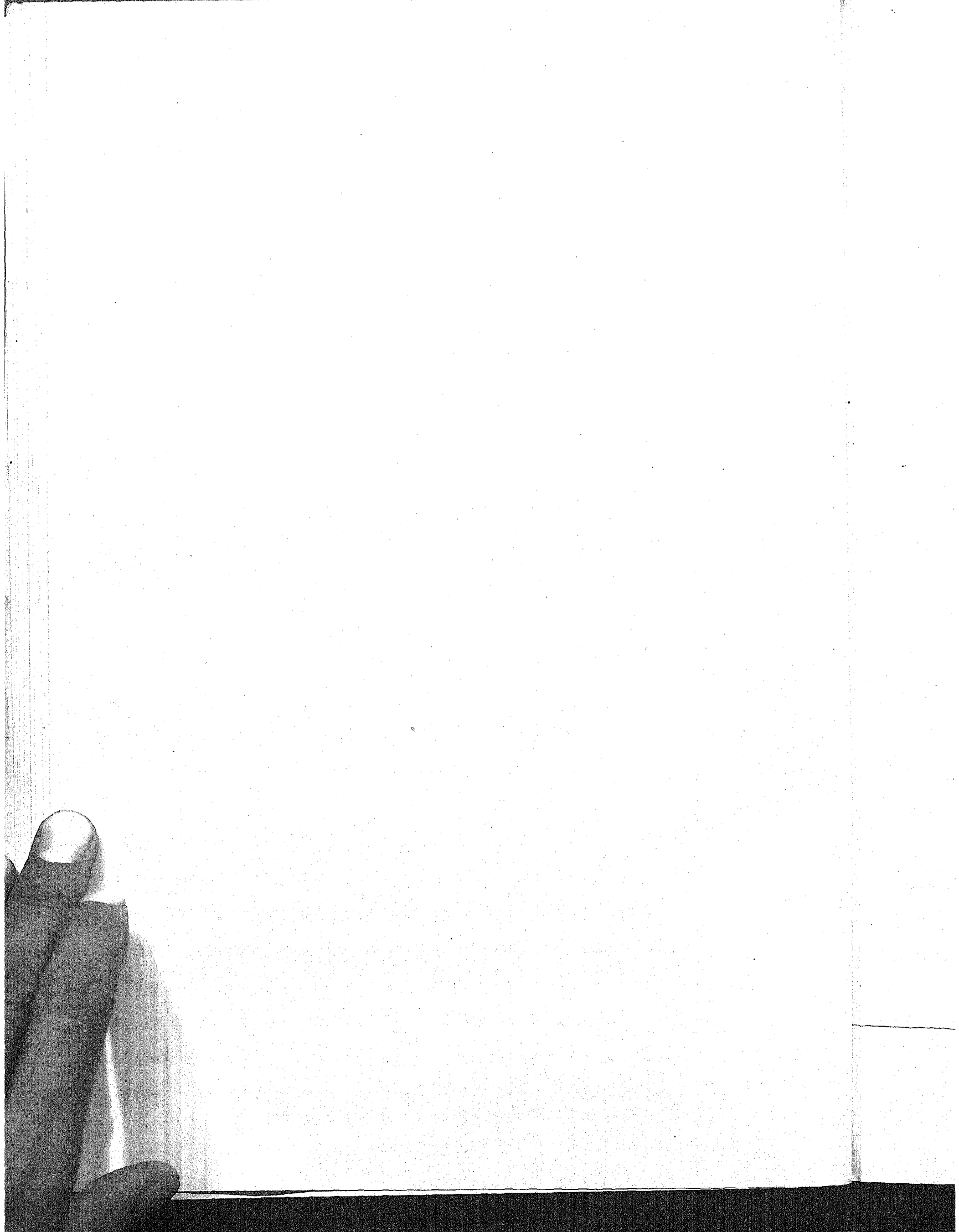
Planning Commission has also given a classification of regions based upon the criterion of physical factors, dividing the state into six zones viz. Uttarakhand, Hill Zone, Eastern Zone, Central Zone, Western Zone and Bundelkhand.

On the basis of contiguity, cropping pattern, geographical and economic conditions, U.P. is divided into five economic regions namely, Western, Central, Eastern, Bundelkhand and Hill region. This classification of regions has been adopted by the Planning Commission of the State Government and "Planning or Economic Regions" of Uttar Pradesh.

In the present study, adopting this classification of regions, we have taken only two regions viz. Eastern and Western Regions, since only these two regions have encouraged distance mode of teaching. There are only two districts in this region having started correspondence teaching i.e. Meerut and Allahabad. Therefore, our study would mainly concentrate on Eastern and Western Regions.

Regional Profile of Education in Uttar Pradesh

Regional Planning has no substitute in the developing countries where distribution of resources is uneven. The regionalisation of education involves planning of various levels, decision making, policy issues, etc. Education is just one of the several components of regional development. The educational planners have neither at the national nor at the state level, played their expected role in reducing regional disparities in the country or at the state levels. Inter-state disparities in the educational levels is one aspect of the problem. Such variations also exist between different regions within a state. Examining the case of Uttar Pradesh, the main area of study, the state has been divided into five regions for the purposes of planning,



viz., Western, Central, Eastern, Bundelkhand and Hills.

This study would concentrate on the growth of population, literacy rate, educational facilities etc. in Uttar Pradesh according to 1951-81 census.

Growth of Population 1951-81, both rural and urban

The population growth during 1951-81 in the state increased from 63.22 million (1951) to 111.86 million (1981), i.e. by +75.37%.

The spatial pattern of population growth during 1971-81 shows the state's population increased from 88.34 million (1971) to 111.86 million (1981) i.e. by 25.49% against the All-India growth rate of 25%. It may be mentioned that during 1961-71 the State's growth rate was only 19.78% against the All India growth rate of 24.80% and during 1951-61 the State's growth rate was 16.66% against the All India growth rate of 21.51%. It means that the State's growth rate which was much lower than that of the All India growth rate during 1951-61 and 1961-71 experienced a phenomenal growth during 1971-81. The population density is thick in Eastern and Western regions.

The growth of urban population is +61.22 for the State. During the decade 1971-81, 15 districts have more than doubled their urban population whereas another 13 districts have recorded growth rates in urban population between 75-100%; 12 districts have recorded

growth rate of urban population below 50% and the remaining 16 have recorded growth rates in urban population ranging between 50-75%.

The spatial growth patterns of rural population during 1971-81 in U.P. which was 19.70% for the state i.e. less than the urban growth rate.

LITERACY - Literacy is a very important indicator of socio-economic development and has a direct bearing on the extension of development technologies. Unfortunately, the literacy rate of U.P. is 27.16% (1981) which is much lower than that of the All-India average of 36.2%. In fact, among the major states of India (except Bihar, J&K, and Rajasthan) it stands at the bottom of the literacy ladder.

The literacy rate in U.P. has increased from 21.68% in 1971 to 27.16% in 1981. It has registered an increase of barely 5.48%.

The problem of rural literacy is very acute as barely 23.06% of the rural population is literate. In the rural areas male literacy is 35.18% whereas female literacy is barely 9.49%. The districts we are concerned with i.e. Allahabad and Meerut have rural literacy rate of - Allahabad 25-30% of rural literacy rate and in Meerut above 30%.

The status of female literacy rate is more deplorable as barely 14.04% females are literate (rural female literacy - 9.49% and urban female literacy - 35.43%).

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The delineation of the spatial pattern of junior and senior basic school facilities in U.P. on district level shows the state average is 65.13 junior basic schools per lakh of population. Allahabad faces in the lowest category of junior basic school, i.e. less than 50. Meerut lies in the middle category i.e. between 75-125 junior basic schools per lakh of population.

The number of senior basic schools per lakh of population on district level shows the state average is 12.69 per lakh of population. Both Allahabad and Meerut lie in the range of 10-20 senior basic schools per lakh of population.

The spatial patterns of higher secondary schools and colleges in U.P. shows that there are 5650 higher secondary schools (Boys schools 4818 and girls schools 832; rural schools 3,668; urban schools 1,982). The state average is 5.06 higher secondary schools per lakh of population. The teacher pupil ratio in the higher secondary schools, Meerut and Allahabad fall in the category of 25-30 pupils per teacher.

Uttar Pradesh has 19 universities, 02 deemed to be universities (Gurukul Kangri Vishwa Vidyalyaya, Haridwar, and Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra). There are 369 colleges (1981-82) which have nearly 3.58 lakh students on their roles. The state average per lakh of population is 0.60-0.80 college in Meerut district.

Allahabad falls in the category of 0.20-0.40 college per lakh of population.

The distribution of teacher-pupil ratio in higher education is 30.5 pupils per teacher in the State as a whole.

Schooling Facilities for Allahabad & Meerut Districts of U.P.

Districts	No. of schools per lakh of population (1982)		Teacher-Pupil Ratio		Higher Secondary schools		Higher Education	
	Junior Basic Schools	Senior Basic Schools	Junior Basic School	Senior Basic School	No. of Schools per lakh of pop.	Teacher Pupil Ratio	No. of Colleges per lakh of pop. (1983)	Teacher Pupil Ratio (1983)
Allahabad	47.67	10.32	38	25	5.58	30	0.42	36.0
Meerut	52.40	10.37	33	38	7.59	29	0.61	25.2

Level of Infrastructural Development

To achieve a "Socialistic pattern of society" is an important objective of Indian planning. Areas with better infrastructure facilities have an opportunity to develop at a faster rate compared to those where such facilities are limited. Educational and health facilities are important among social amenities. The adequate and coordinated development of infrastructural facilities is very important for development of any state. Pucca roads, railroads, electricity, post-offices, and telephone offices, marketing and banking facilities are essential infrastructural facilities for augmentation and sustenance of the development of the State.

Western Region - The 1981 census shows scattered pockets of very high development in infrastructural facilities in Meerut district. The overall picture emerging out of this exercise shows that the Western region is most developed especially in terms of urbanisation and literacy. But it lags behind the State average in terms of road development, school facilities, medical and health services.

The spatial patterns of the Western Region of U.P. comprises of 19 districts covering an area of 82,189 square km. and a population of 39.36 million. It carries an arithmetic density of population of 479 persons/km² next to that of the Eastern Region (485 persons/km²). But it is the most developed region of the State.

Eastern Region - The spatial patterns of this region covers an area of 35,848 sq.km. incorporating 15 districts and having a population (485 persons/sq.km.) among the planning regions of the State but it has the lowest per capita net domestic output (Rs.487). These parameters highlights its regional backwardness and population pressure on the resources. This region is considered far more below the State's average.

We are concerned here only for the above two regions which are our two main areas of study out of the total five regions. The schooling facilities for Meerut and Allahabad districts are shown in the following tables.

On analysis the growth of population, literacy rate and educational facilities on rural - urban basis for the state of Uttar Pradesh with special reference to Eastern and Western regions, we find that due to the overall development of Meerut district, Western region have shown remarkable progress and thus bringing this region to a satisfactory position in terms of educational activities.

At the same time Allahabad district of the Eastern region is better off as compared to a few other districts of the region.

Literacy patterns in Allahabad & Meerut Districts of U.P.

Districts	Percentage of literacy among the total population (1981)	% of growth in literacy (1971-81)	% of literacy among the rural population (1981)	% of female literacy (1981)
Allahabad	27.99	4.11	21.02	12.81
Meerut	34.68	7.34	30.01	20.30

Growth of population in Allahabad & Meerut Districts of U.P.

Districts	% growth rate of population (1951-81)	% growth rate of population (1971-81)	% growth rate of urban population (1971-81)	% growth rate of rural population (1971-81)
Allahabad	+86.26	+29.27	+42.70	+26.23
Meerut	+101.65	+25.33	+73.20	+11.28

Thus the overall picture emerging out of this analysis clearly states that disparity among various districts and regions, these two districts and the regions is very high leading to regional imbalances in the process of educational development. If this disparity is high, it is rather difficult to talk about the development of Distance Education in the State evenly.

GROWTH OF DISTANCE EDUCATION IN UTTAR PRADESH

The state being financially backward and having poor literacy rate of 27.16% and high population pressure, the per-capita allocation of resources for education is meagre. Moreover, the linkage in the educational facilities with the other parts of the area is poor. Areas where large number of junior, senior and higher secondary schools are within the reach of masses, have better opportunities for development in comparison to those which are lagging behind in these facilities. Hence, we can easily believe that through distance education the problem of educational development can be solved and the educational targets can be achieved.

We have earlier studied the literacy rate, population growth and pressure, educational facilities etc. in Uttar Pradesh. On the basis of this we can assess the growth and development of Distance Education in Uttar Pradesh.

The present study is concerned with the development of Distance Education in Uttar Pradesh in terms of trends and present status by making qualitative analysis. The trend would be analysed theoretically on rural/urban basis, sex-wise ratio enrollment, income groups and variables that affect the progress, etc. The growth would be analysed in terms of numbers. The growth of Eastern and Western regions would be emphasised since these

regions stepped forward to imparting education through distance and this study is taking the regional perspective of Uttar Pradesh in view. The growth of population, literacy rate, educational facilities on rural/urban basis, sex-wise ratio, enrollment, etc. would be first theoretically examined at the state level to make the picture clear for the regions of our interest and Western regions of the state. Other regions have taken no step forward in this respect till now.

The trend and present status of these two correspondence schools would be analysed separately according to regions.

WESTERN REGION - This region has only one Institute of Correspondence Studies in Meerut district established in 1969 July, at the graduate level in Arts only. This form of imparting education to students functions on two basic principles :

1. The learning activity may be a lifelong activity for an individual
2. The learning activity is not restricted to the four walls and the formal routine of the college.

In this school at Meerut the students who enrolled themselves for graduate level had mostly crossed 25 years of age and others were around 22 years of age. Normally these students could not have enrolled themselves at the college level due to restriction in the age factor but the correspondence teaching/learning made it possible for them to take up the higher

education on their own sitting at home where they could find it easier to learn. This correspondence institute is running the courses on semester system. The course can be divided into two parts by the students. The remaining course, if left, can be covered by the student during the summer examination.

The aim of imparting education through distance is to extend educational programmes at the doorsteps. It is useful for the ones who cannot reach the colleges for higher education due to various factors. This graduate programme has been found very useful. The success can be assessed by the number of successful candidates which is 470 in which 4 are first division and 172 (76.6%) passed in second division. This clearly indicates that standard of knowledge and aspiration of education is very high. This also shows that the standards by which education is imparted is also high. In subjects like Hindi, Political Science, Economics, History and Maths at least one student has secured first division. In the subjects like Sanskrit and English Literature, this number has increased to 7 and 8. Seeing the success at the graduation level the Institute also decided to have a few more courses like graduation in Commerce and M.A. These two courses started in 1986. Out of the total strength of students, average 60% are males and 40% females.

The year-wise enrollment of the number of students in the Institute of Correspondence Studies is shown below in the chart at the Graduation and Masters levels.

Year	Number of Students at Under-graduate levels		
	<u>B.A.</u>	<u>B.Com.</u>	<u>M.A.</u>
1969-70	1066		
1970-71	2253		
1971-72	3218		
1972-73	3013		
1973-74	3471		
1974-75	1970		
1975-76	1095		
1976-77	950		
1977-78	850		
1978-79	907		
1979-80	670		
1980-81	299		
1981-82	543		
1982-83	533		
1983-84	798		
1984-85	1130		
1985-86	895		
1986-87	1150	220	892
1987-88	430	107	1205

Seeing the above growth in numbers, the need for facilities for private studies like library facilities, proper counselling, etc. may be fulfilled. The cost of this media of education can also be reduced to make it more successful. It has been seen that the growth in number has been on a decreasing trend. The school should feel the responsibility to overcome the problems and fulfil the basic needs of the distant learners of the area. Only then can the trend be on the progressive side

and expansion in educational facilities at all levels can be provided.

EASTERN REGION - This region has only one Institute of Correspondence Education in Allahabad district which was established in 1978 at the University level for students of B.A. only. The principal of imparting education to students was on the same principles as had been for Meerut district. The purpose was to impart education to those who cannot directly reach the colleges for higher education for economic factors, transport hazards, social liability, etc. The students enrolled in courses were from all walks of life and age groups. The enrolment in 1982-83 is 824 and in 1985-86 it was 2,200. This figure distinctly indicates the progress in the area. The standards adopted were simple and straightforward for the learners. These two courses offered are B.A. and B.Com. The scope of introducing new courses has been limited even after a decade has passed after its establishment.

Seeing the enrolment and growth of correspondence schools in the two regions of the state at all levels, it can be assessed that the progress made in the state is negligible. The traditional courses are offered but no further step has been taken to introduce vocational courses. In spite of having two centres of correspondence education, the overall state and the two regions are in a disappointing situation. The following table gives the data indicating the share of correspondence institutions in total enrollment of students for the academic year 1982-83.

TABLE SHOWING COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF
ENROLMENT OF REGULAR AND CORRESPONDENCE STUDENTS

State	College and University Deptt.	Correspondence Courses	Total	Share of correspondence courses in Total Enrolment; $\frac{2 \times 100}{3}$ percent
Uttar Pradesh	4,79,034	1,367	4,80,401	0.1

The rate of enrolment of students on Rural-urban basis shows that the enrolment is significantly lower in rural areas than in urban areas at all levels of education and at all age groups.

The economic factor in education has also to be considered. It not only influences or inspires for ultimate educational attainment. The Education Commission (1964-66) stated that poor children have lesser avenues of education as those who hail from richer families. Therefore, the dropouts of the poors is more at the lower level of education only and thus majority of them remain illiterate.

The sex-wise ratio of the enrolled population shows that among the male and female children, males dominate in enrolment in all age groups both in rural as well as urban areas. All the higher level specially, the female enrolment significantly decreases and remain only half as compared to that of male enrolment.

It should be noted that there are distance teaching institutions with the enrolment as high as 77,000 and others with a meagre number of 160. The viability of these institutions depends on the number of students being enrolled. There are other related fact also which are vital and cannot be ignored which in turn affect the enrolment as well. The reasonable figure of enrollment is 5,000 for a distance education institution

to be viable. It is very disappointing to note that Meerut Directorate falls under non-viable institutions with enrolment of 299 in 1985-86. Thus, those factors must be looked into, which are responsible for the slow growth of these centres.

The growth of distance education in Uttar Pradesh has rather been poor in qualitative as well as quantitative terms. Inter-district variations in the educational levels also exist between the regions of the state. The basic crux of the problem is this only. The spread of infrastructural facilities is not even throughout the state. The eastern region is the most populous region comprising 37% of the state population, followed by Western region which has 36% of the state population. The population in the hill areas constitute only 4.43% of the state population. The arithmetic density of population is the largest in the Western Region (479 persons/km²) next to that of the Eastern Region (485 persons/km²). But the Western Region is the most developed region of the state. The Eastern region lacks in infrastructural facilities like schooling etc. From most of the indicators, it is clear that Western and Hill Regions are advanced regions as compared to Eastern and Bundelkhand regions.

As far as the question of distribution of educational facilities is concerned hill areas are ahead of the other areas and eastern region behind the other regions. Different indicators showing educational levels and facilities in different regions of

Uttar Pradesh are given in the table below :

Regional Disparities in Educational levels in U.P.

Item/Regions	Eastern	Central	Western	Bundel- khand	Hill	State average
Literacy Rate % (1971)	19.4	22.8	22.3	22.5	31.0	21.7
No. of schools in lakh of Population (1978-79)						
Junior Basic Schools	61.5	66.8	62.5	93.7	139.7	68.0
Senior Basic Schools	10.5	11.7	10.2	14.9	22.8	11.2
High/Higher Secondary Schools	4.0	3.2	4.8	4.2	11.6	4.6

From all the indicators it is clear that the Eastern Region of the state is backward from the educational viewpoint. The educational planners must draw their attention towards the poor educational facilities of the Eastern Region especially as compared to Hill Region.

CONCLUSION

Distance Education as we can emphatically assess is an innovative teaching/learning system. It has emerged with a progressive and healthy trend in general and fulfills the educational needs of the society and expectations of the learners. It has brought about radical changes in the educational system of the country. The open learning system has well coordinated the evergrowing population of students and ever-declining resources of education. Its growth at various levels has been on an increasing trend. However, the growth at the higher secondary level has almost been negligible in comparison with under-graduate levels. The future government policies and planning of IGNOU can foresee the growth at all levels.

We have in our study taken up the growth of distance education in regional perspective, a case of Uttar Pradesh which is one of the largest but backward states in terms of development and having wide ranging disparities. The analysis has been carried out on the basis of regions of the state. Since the distance mode of education is not evenly spread throughout the state, thus, we took only Eastern and Western regions as our area of study. In these regions there are two main schools of correspondence studies i.e. at Allahabad (1978) and Meerut (1969) respectively. The enrollment in these schools have been 824 (1982-83) and 2,200 (1985-86) in Allahabad and 543 (1982-83) and 299 (1985-86) in Meerut.

Although Western is the most developed region in the state but it has failed to provide any infrastructural facilities for education specially to correspondence students. The Allahabad district of Eastern Region is backward and has population pressure on its resources. Thus, education falls in more important category to remove its backwardness. The infrastructural facilities should also be improved.

These correspondence schools have not made much considerable progress. Although plans are there to promote them as Distance Teaching Institutions.

In the present study, the growth of distance education in the state is examined and the possible reasons for its regress are looked into and pliable solutions to eradicate them are suggested.

The Problem and the Trend of Distance Education in Uttar Pradesh

- Since educational development cannot uniformly take place, disparities inevitably emerge among regions. The main reasons identified for such differences are uneven distribution of resources on the one hand and inadequacy of provisions of infrastructure on the other. Such factors should be removed to allow the progress of distance education. The transfer of resources must be made to backward areas to remove disparities. The problem analysed in this study is the assessment of the factors responsible for slow growth of distance education in Uttar Pradesh. The growth of distance education in terms of numbers has been assessed to be

not very satisfactory. The courses offered are found to be limited in the Eastern Region of the State. It is, however, noticed that almost no progress is made in the State in the latter half of the 80s. The caste factor, financial aspect and sex ratio plays a vital role in the progress of distance education.

As far as the IGNOU is concerned, there has been a very progressive and healthy trend which is bound to enhance the credibility of the system and benefits to the learners. To have a thoroughly successful plan implementation of distance education a chain of such schools should be open.

If progressive steps are taken in future for distance education, it is sure to merge out as the most successful teaching/learning system. More such schools/organisations should be established to remove pressure on schools and colleges and give an opportunity for education to all at all levels. The infrastructural facilities should be improved so as to give the learners easy access to the distance teaching organisations.

The IGNOU has achieved remarkable progress in recent times in UP at the higher education level. If IGNOU concentrate on imparting education at all levels by initiating the opening of similar unit of distance teaching, Uttar Pradesh would bring about success in imparting education at distance to learners at junior levels also. The resource should be properly and equally distributed in the backward areas of the state so as to bring about even distribution of distance education in the state. Its success depends upon the innovative spirit and the enthusiasm to transform most of the conventional system of education to open education system.

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